Gloſt. No, what needes then that terrible diſpatch of it into your pocket; the qualitie of nothing hath not ſuch need to hide it ſelfe, lets ſee; come if it bee nothing I ſhall not needeſpectacles.

Baſt. I beſeech you Sir pardon me, it is a letter from my brother, that I haue not all ore read; for ſo much as I haue peruſed, I find it not fit for your liking.

Gloſt. Giue me the letter ſir.

Baſt. I ſhall offend either to detaine or giue it; the contents as in part I vnderſtand them, are too blame.

Gloſt. Lets ſee, lets ſee?

Baſt. I hope for my brothers iuſtification, he wrot this but as an eſſay, or taſt of my vertue. *A Letter.*

Gloſt. This policie of age makes the world bitter to the beſt of our times, keepes our fortunes from vs till our oldnes cannot reliſh them; I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppreſſion of aged tyranny, who ſwaies not as it hath power, but as it is ſuffered: come to me, that of this I may ſpeake more; if our father would ſleepe till I wakt him, you ſhould inioy halfe his reuenew for euer, and liue the beloued of your brother *Edgar*.

Hum, conſpiracie; ſlept till I wakt him; you ſhould enioy halfe his reuenew; my ſonne *Edgar*; had hee a hand to write this, a hart, and braine to breed it in; when came this to you, who brought it?

Baſt. It was not brought me my Lord, ther's the cunning of it, I found it throwne in at the caſement of my cloſet.

Gloſt. You know the Caractar to be your brothers?

Baſt. If the matter were good, my Lord I durſt ſweare it were his; but in reſpect of that I would faine thinke it were not,

Gloſt. It is his?

Baſt. It is his hand my Lord, but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Gloſt. Hath he neuer heretofore ſoũded you in this buſines?

Baſt. Neuer my Lord; but I haue often heard him maintaine it to be fit, that ſons at perfit age, & fathers declining, his father ſhould be as ward to the ſonne, and the ſonne mannage the reuenew.

Gloſt.

Gloſt. O villaine, villaine; his v
horred villaine, vnnaturall deteſte
brutiſh; go ſir ſeeke him, i apprehe
where is he?

Baſt. I doe not well know my
ſuſpend your indignation againſt
from him better teſtimony of this
taine courſe; where if you violent
ſtaking his purpoſe, it would ma
honour, & ſhake in peeces the hea
downe my life for him, he hath wr
to your honour, and to no further

Gloſt. Thinke you ſo?

Baſt. If your honour iudge it m
you ſhall heare vs conferre of this,
haue your ſatiffaction, and that w
this very euening.

Gloſt. He cannot be ſuch a mon

Baſt. Nor is not ſure.

Gloſt. To his father, that ſo ten
heauen and earth! *Edmund* ſeeke h
pray you frame your buſines after
vnſtate my ſelfe to be in a due reſo

Baſt. I ſhall ſeeke him ſir preſen
ſhall ſee meanes, and acquaint yo

Gloſt. Theſe late eclipſes in the
no good to vs; though the wiſed
and thus, yet nature finds it ſelfe ſc
loue cooles, friendſhip fals off, b
tinies, in Countries diſcords, Pall
betweene ſonne and father: find
looſe thee nothing; doe it careful
ted *Kent* baniſht, his offence ho n

Baſt. This is the excellent fopp
we are ſicke in Fortune, often the
we make guiltie of our diſaſters, t
Starres; as if we were Villaines by
ly compulſion, Knaues, Theeues,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* (STC 22292) LONDON, 1608 THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.34.k.17